

# **The Role of Prejudice in the Lack of Effective Response by Western Governments to Refugees in Developing Countries: A Threat to Achieving Human and Global Security**

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## **Abstract**

This paper posits that prejudice plays a significant role in the lack of resolve to develop and implement effective responses by the United States and other western governments to refugee populations in developing countries. This discourse examines the construction of racism and prejudice in the United States towards persons of African descent and other persons of color against the backdrop of two phenomena in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The first is the growing recognition in security literature that human security and global security are interdependent. The second is the realization that one of the greatest human security challenges is the large, ever-increasing refugee population in developing nations and Eastern Europe. Interrelated concepts of: group status, stereotyping, system-justifying beliefs and social identity theory will be included in this discourse.

## **Introduction**

The United Nations Commission on Human Security's defines human security as the effort by states and organizations to protect the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and human fulfillment as well as empowering people to provide and care for themselves. Specifically, it entails creating systems that provide people the foundation for survival, dignity and livelihood. This definition encompasses the two core strategies of human security: protection and empowerment of people (United Nations Commission on Human Security 2003).

In the aftermath of *9/11* and with the increased concern over global terrorism, the United States along with the international community has identified the achievement of global security as a critical priority. In their attempt to achieve such a critical priority the United States along with the international community continue to operate under the influence of the Cold War era security models. Models of state security from the Cold War era are predicated on the premise that the state is responsible for procuring the means to protect its citizens from external

threats (United Nations Commission on Human Security 2003; Foster 2005). Within the context of this model the state is considered the core agent and security is synonymous to defense and military power and action. However, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the origins of threats to state security and subsequently, global security are not exclusively external anymore. Internal conflicts as opposed to interstate/nation conflicts represent one of the greatest threats to international peace and security. For example, the exclusion of persons to goods and wealth contributes to tension, violence and conflict within nations (United Nations Commission on Human Security 2003). Thus, internationally, governments are facing a myriad of internal and external menaces and threats. The traditional models of security proliferated during The Cold War era, which targeted external threats and defense from such threats are found to be too narrow and antiquated in their utility of facing the new challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and a post *9/11* world. Therefore this lack of efficacy has perpetuated a need to create new paradigms of global security that can address the totality of external and internal threats. There has emerged “the recognition that security is, at root, a psychological and sociological phenomenon that starts and ends with the individual. To be secure, is literally to be free from harm and danger, threat and intimidation, doubt and fear, need and want” (Foster 2005, 41). Such paradigms embrace a preventative and mitigating approach to global human suffering as a means of achieving global security as opposed to a solely preemptive or containment philosophy. These new paradigms based on the realization that the achievement of global security is intimately linked to the guarantee of human security among the nations of the world.

Within the scope of the realization and definition of human security, the existence of refugee populations can be considered as one of the greatest human security challenges facing the international community. This premise is supported by the tenet that human security

philosophically requires that one consider the security of individuals as the central objective of obtaining security. Thus, threats to human security involve such issues as: human rights abuses, hunger, poverty and lack of educational opportunities (Mack 2004). These issues are germane to refugees and result in ongoing threats to their human security. In 1999, Sadako Ogata, the High Commissioner of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) expounded on this connection between the concept of human security and refugees in a keynote address (Suhrke 2003; The Lancet 2003). At the end of 2005, the UNHCR reported that there were 8.4 million refugees throughout the world. These refugees due to the threats to human security that exist among them represent large numbers of marginalized, suffering, destitute and hopeless individuals. The result is crisis situations throughout the globe, with the potential to destabilize already fragile nations to which they often flee. Furthermore, this establishes communities throughout the world where insurgent and terrorist groups who demonstrate any intent to resolve the suffering of such individuals can infiltrate and utilize as places of asylum and membership recruitment. The synergy of these factors produces a threat to the global security of the United States and the international community.

Historically, world governments have relied on and expected the United States and other western governments to bear the responsibility of providing assistance to the United Nations and other NGO's to mitigate the refugee crisis throughout the world. The wealth of the U.S. and other western governments is the catalyst for this expectation. Western governments have responded by providing various types of humanitarian aid, some more so than others. However, much of the aid represents only a fragmented, temporary panacea to multifarious situations. Despite this realization, among Western governments there continues to be an absence in commitment to develop and implement strategic, effective, enduring approaches that

aggressively assuage this ongoing human security challenge. Therefore, advancements in the pursuit of global security are compromised. In the absence of explanation, along with the observation that the majority of refugees are found within African nations and the historical racism displayed by Western governments and in particular the United States towards individuals of African descent it is theorized that the psychological constructs of stereotypes and prejudice are responsible for such neglect.

This paper explores the relationship between historical racism, stereotypes and prejudices regarding individuals of African descent that exist within the societal and institutional frameworks of the United States government and the lack of efficacious response to refugees. This exploration will be guided through the lenses of social identity theory and system-justifying beliefs.

## **Refugees**

The Articles of The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, its 1967 Protocol and the Office of the UNHCR define a refugee as a individual who “owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality [or of habitual residence] and is unable to or owing to such fear is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.” The 1969 Organization of African Unity Refugee Convention and the 1984 Cartagena Declaration in Latin America expanded this definition to include persons who have fled because of war or civil conflict. Internationally, this definition continues to be the litmus test in determining whether or not an individual can be classified as a refugee. A total of 145 countries have signed the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention and/or its 1967 Protocol and recognize persons as refugees based on the definitions contained in these and regional

instruments (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 1996; Ogata, 2003). However, the modern day refugee population consists not only of externally displaced persons but internally displaced persons (IDP's), which constitute 6.6 million individuals (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 2006). Thus, this widely utilized definition does not capture the complexity of the refugee population in modern times. Consequently, it denies refugee status to millions of individuals; therefore, preventing them from obtaining asylum and assistance. Additionally the UNHCR identifies other subgroups of individuals, which do not meet the criteria of this formal definition yet are considered persons of concern and in need of assistance. Such persons include: asylum seekers, returned refugees and others of concern. These subgroups along with refugees represent 19.2 million individuals. Thus the magnitude of displaced persons that the UNHCR recognizes as needing assistance far exceeds individuals described by this definition.

Regarding geographical grouping of the world's 8.4 million refugees as defined by the formal definition, Africa contains 33 1/3 % of the refugee population, Central Asia, South-West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East (CASWANAME) contains 33 1/3%, Europe 23% , Asia and the Pacific 10% and the Americas 7%. Women typically comprise 50% of mass refugee situations. In African and the CASWANAME region, more than 50% of the refugees are under the age of 18 years old. Additionally, there are six countries, five of which are African nations that produce more than 10,000 prima facie refugees. These countries consist of Togo, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia and Iraq (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 2006).

One of the most desolate situations among the world's refugee population is that of protracted refugees. A protracted refugee situation is defined as one in which "refugees find

themselves in a long-lasting and intractable state of limbo. Their lives may not be at risk, but their basic rights and essential economic, social and psychological needs remain unfulfilled after years in exile. A refugee in this situation is often unable to break free from enforced reliance on external assistance” (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 2004, 1). Thirty-eight protracted refugee situations exist in the world accounting for 6.2 million refugees. Twenty-two of these situations are in Africa and represents 2.3 million persons. This does not include North Africa. In Central Asia, South West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East (CASWANAME), eight protracted situations exist. This accounts for 2.7 million refugees. Five major protracted refugee situations exist in the other parts of Asia representing 670,000 refugees and three major protracted situations in Europe accounted for 530,000 refugees (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 2004). Thus, as one considers the geographic and demographic characteristics of the international refugee population, the majority of these individuals are of African descent. Also, the majority of these individuals are protracted refugees living mainly within the borders of African nations.

Protracted refugee populations, which represent the majority of the refugees, exemplify an international human security crisis and subsequently a global security concern. For “the consequences of having so many human beings in a static state include: wasted lives, squandered resources and increased threats to security” (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees 2004, 3). According to the World Bank, poverty is a tripartite construct, which consists of a lack of income and assets, powerlessness and lack of representation in the institutions of State and society and vulnerability to adverse conditions along with an inability to cope with them. Protracted refugee situations perpetuate each of these dimensions through lack of access to employment and education, increased vulnerability to the development of trauma related mental

disorders and the proliferation of abject poverty. Additionally, because these individuals do not have national protection, they are often subjected to tyranny by host governments or rogue militias. Also, 90% of the refugee populations reside in the world's poorest nations. The problems of these nations, which include declining economies, limited land and other resources along with chronic unemployment result in growing hostilities towards refugees (Newman, 2003). The combined impact of these factors result is a vast population of desperate, forgotten and hopeless individuals whose movement is restricted and confined to a small geographic area. The synergistic effect of such destitution leads to the proliferation of criminal survival tactics typically involving the exploitation of the weaker members of refugee situations, usually women and children. Such activities typically take the form of prostitution, sex trafficking and child labor. Furthermore, protracted refugee situations, can become fertile breeding grounds for anti-Western, anti- U.S., radical political movements. These radical political movements are instigated by known terrorist or potential terrorist groups that infiltrate such refugee camps under the guise of desiring to provide relief to the suffering of individuals entrapped in these desolate conditions. Unfortunately, many of these groups view refugees as nothing more than pawns to be utilized to advance their political agenda. Approximately 15% of refugee situations result in the militarization of refugee camps. Within these situations, refugee women typically experience sexual torture at the hands of rogue militants (Pittaway and Bartolomei 2002). Thus, the exploitation of refugees continues (Newman, 2003; Stedman and Tanner 2003).

### **Social Identity Theory and American History**

Social identity theory states that individuals categorize others into ingroups and outgroups on the basis of ethnicity, nationality, social class, gender, age and occupation. This is defined as social categorization. As human beings our self-esteem is a function of membership in

the perceived superior ingroup. Thus, individuals maintain their self-esteem by identifying with the ingroup and denigrating the outgroup (Fiske and Ruscher 1993; Hong, Coleman, Chan, Wong, Chiu, Hansen, Lee, Tong and Fu 2004). Consequently, people will treat members of their group more favorably in comparison to members of the perceived outgroups, often discriminating. Research has illustrated that a person's social identity predicts prejudice and intergroup discrimination and perceptions (Brewer 1999; Hewstone 1996; Weeks and Luper 2004). This occurs because our social categorization of others activates the stereotypes we have about individuals based on their group memberships. Stereotypes are rigid and inaccurate preconceived notions that we have about others, which are extremely resistant to change.

The United States is one of the most racialized nations on the globe (Sue, 2003). Its legacy of African slave trade and sanctioning of such practices by the federal and state governments in the U.S. was the greatest catalyst for this racialization. This historical event would eventually result in the practice by American society and government of categorization according to race/ethnicity and the subsequent sociopolitical implications (Miller, Smith and Mackie 2004; Yanow 1996). Historically, America was propelled on this journey of racialization by the ensuing conflict between the practice of slavery with the premise of the Declaration of Independence (1776), which states, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." This contradiction resulted in public and academic discourse within government and society regarding the justification of enslaving persons of African descent. Through the writings of the founding fathers, such as the Notes on the State of Virginia by Thomas Jefferson, public discourse, scientific research and judicial rulings eventually persons of African descent were labeled as not a part of the human race and inferior. Therefore, they were not included within the definition of men and their enslavement justified. This philosophy was illustrated by

the three-fifths clause in the 1778 U.S. Constitution, which defined a Black slave as three-fifths of a man. This conclusion was based on phenotype, particularly the color of one's skin. This construction of Whiteness also resulted in White becoming synonymous with being human and subsequently American. The similarity of one's physical characteristics to one or the other group became the standard for ascribing membership and the level of superiority.

Racism is "any attitude, action or institutional structure or any social policy that subordinates persons or groups because of their color" (Sue 2003). The slave trade in American, a system of human subjugation and the racial tenets that emerged about humankind set the stage for an enduring legacy of racism within America; a legacy, which has resulted in racism and American democracy being entwined (Janara 2004). The racial legacy of slavery also solidified the identity of the superior ingroup and the inferior outgroup in America. This general framework conceptualizes Euro American/White individuals as superior versus African American/Black individuals as inferior. This litmus test of phenotype would be repeated throughout American history and presented as justification for the oppression of other racial/ethnic minorities; Native Americans, Latinos and Asians. Often the argument was made that persons from these ethnic/racial minority groups were closer in appearance to those of African descent and thus inferior to individuals of the White race. With this dichotomy evolved pervasive stereotypes associated with racial/ethnic minorities, persons of African, Asian, Native American and Latino ancestry. Such stereotypes include: unintelligent, dishonest, uncontrollable sexual drives and propensity to criminal behavior to name a few. Thus denial by the government of legal rights, protection, access to education and employment and basic human rights was considered justifiable due to these stereotypes.

The racialization of the United States, also established a social hierarchy of status, which is the level of access to material goods such as money, food, land and social goods being political authority, power and respect (O'Brien and Major 2005). This hierarchy continues to be based on racial group membership. Members of the dominant or Euro-American culture became the high status group and persons of color and their various groups the low-status groups. This phenomenon is exemplified by the overrepresentation of ethnic minorities among the poor and unemployed and under representation of ethnic minorities regarding elected officials, the wealthy and college graduates. For example, although White Euro-American males represent approximately 33% of the U.S. population they account for 80% of tenured positions in higher education, 80% of the House of Representatives, 84% of the U.S. Senate, 92% of Forbes 400 executive CEO-level positions, 90% of public school superintendents, 99.9% of athletic team owners and 100% of U.S. presidents (Sue 2003).

The continuation of this hierarchal social system of status is legitimized by the formation of system justifying beliefs. The collective impact of these beliefs is that status differences among groups is fair and “justify the social system by explaining differences in the distribution of social and material goods in terms of differences in individual effort, talent and merit” (O'Brien and Major 2005). Consequently, system-justifying beliefs diminish motivation to change the system on a national and individual level. Within the United States, the system justifying beliefs that have emerged to substantiate the existing differences in status among White Euro Americans and racial/ethnic minorities include: the Protestant Work Ethic, the Belief in Individual Mobility and the Belief in a Just World.

## **Racism and Categorization of Refugees**

Interestingly, 73% of refugees in protracted situations are receiving some type of assistance through the United Nations or NGO's. The UNHCR is the primary division of the United Nations that provides support to refugees and other persons of concerns. Contributions provided by countries from around the world along with private donors help it to complete its mission. The United States annually contributes 25% of the total UNHCR budget. The majority of U.S. contributions to UNHCR are earmarked by region. Despite the significant amounts of money contributed to the UNHCR by America and other nations, it is evident that funding or humanitarian aid alone is not sufficient to resolve protracted and non-protracted refugee situations; for the average period of major refugee situation regardless of whether it is protracted or not is 17 years. Several factors contribute to the ineffectiveness. Unfortunately, the contribution of humanitarian aid to refugees by many nations is motivated by national-interest and is reactionary and not well thought out. Additionally, there has been the lack of a comprehensive approach by the United States and others, which addresses the cause and effects of refugee situations. Such an approach involves acknowledgment of the connection between human rights abuses and forcible displacement of civilian populations, along with sustained political and diplomatic initiatives, development assistance, human rights monitoring and the strengthening of civil societies. Thus, the question remains as to the motivation for the lack of such a comprehensive approach. Some would argue that the lack of adequate response by the United States and other Western nations is due to refugee situations being more so vulnerabilities instead of threats.

In security literature a threat is a concern that is clearly identifiable, immediate and necessitates an understandable response. However, with the advent of new concepts such as

human security and environmental security, nations are wrestling more with the notion of vulnerability. Vulnerabilities are unclear identifiable concerns, which are connected to interdependent and complex issues. Thus, such situations do not suggest clear and accurate responses (Liotta 2005). Therefore, the supposition is presented that due to the multifaceted, unpredictable and intricate political and humanitarian circumstances that refugee situations represent, it is difficult to determine the most appropriate response to mitigate the situations. Thus, such uncertainty leads to ineffective responses, not a lack of desire. Yet, another hypothesis exists for the lack of response, historical racism and subsequent stereotypes and prejudice.

The enduring practice of categorizing and determining the value of another human being based on physical appearance or race/ethnicity continues to be a part of America's cultural fabric. Culture shapes a nation's institutions and its practices. The two are inseparable. Therefore, the racist legacies of the United States continue to manifest itself in the policies and practices of its educational, political and judicial systems, which unfairly discriminate against racial/ethnic minorities or persons of color. Thus, the political salience of ethnicity cannot be denied. Our political leaders are not immune from its influence. According to Van Dijk, "an analysis of fragments of parliamentary debates about ethnic affairs in Europe and North America shows that such talk is premised on humanitarian values of tolerance, equality and hospitality. At the same time, however, politicians, participate in more subtle forms of elite racism when they present immigration and minority relations as essentially problematic, if not threatening, while defining refugees, immigrants and minorities as a main cause of many societal problems." Thus, discrimination reaches beyond those persons of color within the borders of America to those in other nations. Specifically, the lack of efficacious response by the United States to refugee

situations is instigated by the fact that the majority of refugees are of African descent, female and poor, individuals that are considered as low status and outgroup members within the culture of the nation. Thus the supposition is presented that the United States refugee policies and practices are a product of institutional racism. Also, due to system justifying beliefs and in particular the beliefs found within the U.S. culture, the absence of an effective refugee policy is legitimized. The United States' refusal to intervene in ceasing the genocide of The Tutsi population that occurred in Rwanda and the genocide that continues in the Dafur region of Sudan, despite the spread of such chaos into neighboring nations of Chad and Central African Republic and disregard for refugee abuse in Congo, The Gambia and West Timor (Stedman and Tanner 2003; Kristof 2006) supports this stance. Within the European Union (EU) practices have emerged that permit discrimination against and unequal treatment of asylum-seekers, often referred to as xenophobia or xeno-racism, a racism that is directed at refugees and other displaced, dispossessed and uprooted individuals. Also, within the EU the policy of global migration management has emerged. The impetus for this policy is the growing awareness that immigration, including refugees is necessary, for Europe will be facing a labor shortage due to an aging population and declining birth rates. Thus, there is a need for the entrance of skilled laborers into the various countries. The policy of global migration management is the EU's response to this emerging demographic crisis and subsequent labor shortage. However, many view this policy as a catalyst for abolishing the rights of refugees to seek asylum for it promotes skill-based admissions policy. Also, within Britain there is the practice of residentially separating asylum seekers based on their native tongue, in essence creating ghettos within various cities. This results in immigrants being separated from the larger community hindering their

assimilation and acquisition of civic skills and language which would enable them the opportunity to contribute to the community (Lowe 2006; Fekete 2001; Schuster 2003).

Additionally, since the occurrence of *9/11*, America's and the western world's political systems and international policies have been operating under an acute sense of threat and the need to ensure national and global security. Within the United States, the *9/11* terrorist attacks came to symbolize an attack on nationalism. Subsequently, this event resulted in a renewed sense of nationalism and the determination to protect this at any cost (Grewal 2003). The renewed sense of nationalism and quest for security, led the nation to revisit the idea of what does it mean to be American or more pointedly who's American? The answer to this question was quickly illustrated through the media images emerging after the attacks, where public safety heroes and grieving Americans were typically depicted as White Euro-American and male; excluding racial/ethnic minorities and women. The most salient example of this was the ensuing race and gender based conflict that arose among New York firefighters over the erection of a memorial statue. These images and associated message of identity, which encompass White American superiority and privilege were branded on the social psyche of the nation as well as pushed and applauded. Culturally and psychologically, all individuals excluded from this definition were categorized as non-American and potentially a threat to the security of the United States.

From the influence of this event and its aftermath, a governmental philosophy whose historical roots could be found in the racial legacy of slavery and practices of the United States emerged of Americans being the superior being and having the right to protect their identity with American being defined as Anglo, White and male. This philosophy manifested itself in a governmental policy on security coined the *war on terror*. From a military perspective two

principles emerged, out of this philosophy, preventative coercion and imperial dominance as a means of achieving security. Preventative coercion entails the use of military force to avert a potential threat to security as opposed to immediate threat. Imperial dominance is the phenomenon of expansive military superiority, which far exceeds any other nation along with a disregard for international legal regulation and political sensitivities of allies. In regards to social categorization, the influence of this governmental policy, through the *war on terror* resulted in security and threat becoming connected to classifications of race; more explicitly Middle Eastern and implicitly persons of color (Steinbruner and Gallagher 2004; Grewal 2003). Consequently, refugees who resemble racial/ethnic minorities excluded from the definition of American, came to symbolize not only outgroup members, low status, less valued members of the international community in the minds of western governments but now a potential threat to national and global security due to their group membership. In particular this threat to security was exacerbated by the realization that some terrorist training camps were located within African nations. Therefore, we have as well the social categorization of refugees as potential terrorist.

### **Responding to Refugees**

Despite the promulgation of international policy that has not responded to the genocide in Rwanda or Sudan and the continued refugee abuse in other African nations, the U.S. has increased its funding for refugees in African nations. In the last two years, there has been a trend by the United States government to earmark regionally for Africa, the majority of its UNHCR's contribution. In 2005, the United States contributed 322.7 million dollars to UNHCR, 53.5 million was allocated for Africa. Recently, for 2006 the United States contributed 200.8 million dollars to UNHCR, 104 million of this contribution was allocated for Africa. Also, in 2006, the quota of African persons allowed to obtain immigration status in the United States was

increased. This redirection of UNHCR contributions by the United States towards Africa and the increase in the number of African persons allowed into the country outwardly appears to represent a valuing of the refugees and concern for their suffering. However, in comparison to other countries per capita, the U.S. contributes less. According to the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, the U.S. government contributes \$1.47 per capita to the three major international refugee aid agencies: UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the United Nations Relief & Works Agency (UNRWA). In contrast, Norway gives \$12.89 per capita, Luxembourg provides nearly \$11 per capita, and Denmark contributes close to \$8 per capita to these agencies. Additionally, the quota increase of African persons still represents a reduction from previous years. Furthermore, under the Bush Administration, anti-terrorism legislation has resulted in the expansion of the legal definition of what it means to be associated with a terrorist organization; a narrow and restrictive interpretation of the material support provision of the Patriot Act and Real ID Act. Material support is defined as “including a safe house, transportation, communications, funds, transfer of funds, or other materials” (United States Congress 2005). The result is the inclusion of refugees victimized by brutal regimes and rebel groups who take control of and militarized their camps. Therefore, women in Liberia and Sierra Leone who saw their husbands killed, were raped and homes confiscated have been denied access to the United States refugee resettlement program because they were forced to cook for and shelter militants (U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants; Garcia, Lee and Tatelman 2005).

These factors, less contribution per capita, historical decrease in the allowance of Africans seeking asylum and new terrorism legislation, suggest that the U.S. government’s increased UNHCR’s contributions for African simply illustrates a recognition of the national and

global security threat that ongoing refugee situations represent; the majority existing in Africa. This recognition is characterized by political shortsightedness. It does not denote any significant shift in policy with an aim to develop a holistic and long range strategy that addresses the political causes of refugee situations, while yet reducing the exploitation, trauma, poverty and suffering among African refugees. It is a far cry from previous U.S. international development thinking which encompass a long-range vision such as the Marshall Plan for the reconstruction of Europe during World War II, the establishment of the Peace Corps during the Kennedy era and recognition of newly formed African nations (Moseley 2006). Instead, the U.S. government's war on terror alone has become the motivation for humanitarian aid, not a sudden valuing of African people and the plight of refugees. Simply put, African refugees are a means to an end. Thus, justification of humanitarian aid is shrouded in the shortsighted politics and positions of the current administration. Refugees become pawns, insignificant players in the *war on terror*.

## **Conclusion**

Therefore, it is surmised that the current U.S. increase in aid will not be more effective in reducing the refugee crisis in Africa nor does such contributions, denote a decrease in the influence of institutional racism within America's refugee policy. According to the UNHCR, a comprehensive approach to the refugee situations must address cause and effects, recognizing that the causes of ongoing refugee situations are political. However, such an approach must be underpinned by a notion of respect for refugees and their capacity to bring about change and be productive or self-determination. The historical racism, stereotypes and prejudices regarding individuals of African descent that exist within the societal and institutional frameworks of the United States culture; and other western governments are pervasive. Therefore, it is posited that

the psychological influence of these factors will hinder refugee policy makers in meeting this criteria of respect because it prevents them from adopting a multicultural perspective; this perspective, which entails the recognition and valuing of cultural differences among individuals as well as valuing persons who are different than you. Such a perspective is necessary in demonstrating respect towards refugees, for the majority of the population represent individuals from collectivist cultures, whose value preferences differ from American culture. Therefore, cultural differences are inherent in the resolution process of refugee situations and demand cultural sensitivity on the part of policy makers. Thus, multiculturalism is imperative for policy makers.

The inclusion of multiculturalism in the arena of security is not new. The discourse on the role of multiculturalism in regards to post-conflict institution building is already occurring (Simonsen 2005). Although cultural differences are readily apparent between the majority of the world's refugee populations and the western world, specifically the United States, the practical implications of these cultural differences in successfully developing and implementing refugee policy must be respected. The lack of such respect, ultimately leads to a disregard of the salient components of refugees' identity and often times those characteristics, which have assisted them in surviving horrid conditions. Subsequently, despite what appears to be generous funding by the U.S., the lack of such a discourse and respect will derail the development of a comprehensive and effective response to the refugee populations. This derailment will be due to the lack of a multicultural response because of racism, despite the recognition of refugee situations as human security crisis and thus a threat to global security.

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